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WASHINGTON TALK

Briefing

AS perennial as the Cherry Blossoms in the Spring, the inevitable Crackdown on Leaks was announced the other day.

"A problem of major proportions," said President Reagan, echoing similar statements by his predecessors. This time the President's ire seemed to focus on the often leaky Pentagon and National Security Council, with some defense officials going so far as to voluntarily take lie detector tests to prove their innocence.

At the Pentagon, some middle-level officials seemed annoyed and perplexed at the exercise, terming the tests "undignified, silly, useless."

One official hooted with laughter at the suggestion that the tests might stop leaks? And a secretary confessed that she had a built-in lie detector. "My face just turns bright red whenever I tell a lie," she said.

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